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CU-45A/1

10 March 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, WH-4

SUBJECT: DCI's [REDACTED] Check List

I am attaching two copies of a check list prepared by the DCI covering points which he feels should be given consideration. You will note that they are not matters calling for immediate action but I think that it would be useful early next week (subject to Saturday's decision) to discuss our reactions. You will remember that General Cabell has shown an interest in pursuing Point 11 and will probably call a meeting on it sometime next week (again, subject to Saturday's decision).

C. Tracy Barnes
A/DDP/A

Attachment: Two cc's check list

DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☒
CLASSIFICATION
CLASS. AND EXTENDED TO: 15 DEC 2011
EXPIRATION DATE
AUTHORITY
DATE 11/12/21 BY SP-10/21

STATE/L.Smith/Cuba 61-63
reopened Apr 95
18 Apr 95 Doc.# 85; 5 pp.

CU-84

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Although there is no question that we must show flexibility and willingness to examine any reasonable suggestions, I believe that we MUST at the same time transmit the following basic premises at some point. How and in just what language is obviously a matter of tactics and depends on the way the session is progressing.

1. Flexibility must be weighed against the past and also against an important present fact of life. As far as the past is concerned, we have varied the plan considerably and have also carefully examined a number of possibilities which were discarded as being inadequate (e.g. series of small landings, single night landing, taking of Isle of Pines, trying to capture airfield in Zapata, etc.) Consequently, there has been history of change and attempts at adjustment.

The applicable present circumstance is the Cuban Strike Force. The Cubans cannot be ordered to do anything. True they do not know the present plan but they do know their weapons, including planes and tanks, and they do know that a landing in full force is planned. Present plans No. 1 and No. 5 are within the scope of the action for which they volunteered. Anything else should be cleared with their leaders and might not be accepted, but surely should not be accepted until cleared.

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- 2 -

CU-15X3

2. The long process of analysis has brought forward two plans. These have been meticulously cleared with DOD. We are prepared to negotiate in connection with them any contingencies or conditions, laid down by the DOD. These plans are not necessarily the last word but they have been determined to have a good chance, to be effective and there should be some reasonable alternative put forward, not just a haphazard suggestion, to require full scale planning of something new. (This assumes that we have knocked down the Mann "slow build-up" scheme.)

3. There appear to be misconceptions about present plans:

a. Air activity is limited. Strafing of specific targets will be involved, not indiscriminate bombing and two aircraft is probably the most that will be seen at any one time. Moreover, there will probably never be more than four over the whole of Cuba at any one time.

b. It is NOT a U.S. operation. Surely there are and will be allegations and evidence of U.S. support. The operation, however, is by Cuban volunteer patriots, operating entirely from non-U.S. bases. These Cubans cannot be ordered to do anything (could be if a U.S. operation). They will be patriotically fighting to install a Cuban-selected provisional government. The only foreign government with any jurisdiction over them is the Guatemalan government and it cannot order them to invade, it can only attempt to

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impose rules or sanctions within Guatemala. The U.S. need not feel sorry for the governments of Guatemala and Nicaragua, they know what they are doing and the Ydigoras letter plus the Alejos trip do not indicate any hesitancy on the parts of the Guats. All equipment being used is easily purchasable and is in many countries already. Deniability, though tenuous, will exist. Moreover, any other form of action will be laid at the U.S. door and in the case of the Mann "blow build-up" approach will involve much more U.S. participation.

4. Despite foregoing, greater flexibility would be possible if it were not for the unavoidable time urgency. Cannot change rainy season, moon phase, post factors bearing on morale or fact that time generally running against us.

5. Nothing succeeds so much as success. Consequently, the plan most likely to succeed has many advantages in the long run over one which modifies this chance in order to gain temporary political benefits. Such temporary benefits would be of little value against the loss of the ultimate goal or even at the expense of unduly extending the conflict which will tend to force U.S. participation and offer opposition forces and efforts an opportunity to organize and accentuate their effect.

In conclusion, I believe that we must not undersell what we have carefully prepared and on which a favorable DOD reaction has been obtained after detailed review. It is easy for State

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- 4 -

have carefully prepared and on which a favorable DOD reaction has been obtained after detailed review. It is easy for State to throw all sorts of wild or unanalysed possibilities into the hopper on the theory that ANYTHING might conceivably work and the burden of proving impossibility is on us. In view of time and history, we should ask to be let out rather than be forced to review any new plan which doesn't on its face contain REAL possibilities and REAL advantages. It must be remembered that our two plans have been tested and passed as feasible by the authorities in government having the proper jurisdiction.

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